

Story #639 (1974, Tape #50)

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Retort -- indecent

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The Student's Indecent Retort to the Hoca

medrese

Once in the past there was a religious school in Konya. Every year during Ramazan¹ the school would send out one of its students to perform the 'teravi',² a special prayer. There was a certain village in the vicinity which every year would reject whatever student the school sent it, and he would always return promptly. Every year the school would send a student there, and each year the student returned right away without having performed the special prayer.

During one particular year a student applied to the director of the school to be permitted to go out to a village to say the special prayer during Ramazan. He was told that all the surrounding villages had already been allotted to students. When he insisted on wanting to go to a village, he was informed that there was only one village left, and that was one where each year they had sent a student for the special prayer during Ramazan and

¹Ramazan is the holy month in Islam, a month of fasting and special religious observances.

²The teravi is a special prayer service reserved for the month of Ramazan.

from which each year the student was quickly rejected and had returned without having performed it. The student said he would gladly go to that village to perform the teravi prayer service. So he went.

When he arrived at the village and explained his purpose, the villagers told him that he would have to be tested by the hoca there before they could accept his services. The next morning the hoca came to the student and asked, "Why do these Turks who break the sanctity of their ritual ablution³ by going to the latrine then always return there a second time, thus breaking it again?"

"Well, efendi," replied the student, "we go back to examine that which has caused us to spoil our cleanliness, to see if we have provided enough to feed a hoca. If it is not enough, we add some more to it. That is why."

The hoca cried out, "Catch that boy!" [Laughter among audience.]

³Before engaging in each of the five daily prayer services, a Moslem performs carefully prescribed ritual ablutions. If he commits any unclean act between the ablution and the prayers, his state of religious cleanliness is automatically nullified, and he must perform his ablutions all over again.